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LOMBARD  
COLLEGE  
BULLETIN

Series IX  
Number 2

*The Future of Lombard  
College and Ryder  
Divinity School*

*A Referendum Bulletin*

April, 1912

Issued Bi-Monthly by  
Lombard College, Galesburg, Illinois



*The Lombard students were recently asked to vote on the six following questions and did so with results appended.*

We have 109 students registered this year. Some of these are here only for a Semester, some are music and special students, and some local students are excused from chapel on certain days for reasons that appear sufficient, so this Semester we have sixty-one students due at chapel service. Of this number fifty-five voted as follows:

1. Shall Lombard stay where it is? Yes, 49. No answer, 1.  
No. 3. Yes under conditions, 2.
2. If Lombard goes on where it is will you attend next year? Yes, 44. Doubtful, 2. No, 9. (Some of these Seniors).
3. If Lombard moves shall it be Knox-Lombard on Knox campus? No, 27. Yes, 24. Do not care, 2. Yes, if you can't bring it to Lombard campus, 2.
4. If it is Knox-Lombard on Knox campus would you attend there next year? No, 40. Yes, 12. Not if I can help it, 1. Uncertain, 2.
5. If Lombard moves from here shall it affiliate with Chicago University? No, 29. Yes, 18. Uncertain, 8.
6. If Lombard should affiliate with Chicago would you attend there next year? No, 41. Yes, 6. Uncertain, 8.

The students were also asked to state any other plan for the future of Lombard that they had in mind not named above, and what their college plans for next year were as far as they knew. The answers to these questions were generally already stated in questions answered, and nothing especially definite was elicited.

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It seems that a larger referendum among all officials of Lombard, former students, donors, friends, might be helpful just now, and the following questions are proposed. Now the question of the future of Lombard is up for discussion, that discussion ought to be very searching, and some plan finally adopted that the majority will stand by loyally for the next generations.

1. Shall Lombard stay where it is?
  2. If Lombard stays where it is will you pledge it your loyal support in money, students and influence as far as you possibly can?
  3. Shall Lombard unite with Knox?
  4. Shall Lombard move to Springfield, Illinois?
  5. Shall Lombard move to Hoopeston, Illinois?
  6. Shall Lombard affiliate with Chicago University?
  7. Have you other plans to suggest for the future of Lombard?
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The difficulty of intelligently voting on these questions may likely be that no plan is yet settled, or worked out into exact details. No one can tell exactly what it is that he votes for or against.

This Bulletin is an effort to state arguments that have been made on both sides of all proposed plans. It is not at all an Official Bulletin. Neither the Trustees nor the Committee of Five have seen it. It is simply an effort of President Fisher to sum up briefly such words as have come to him for or against plans for the Future of Lombard College.

First of all a word may be said about Ryder Divinity School. This school is not a separate incorporated body but is held as an accepted trust by the Board of Trustees of Lombard College. Lombard College has \$242,000 in cash endowment, and its campus, buildings, plant, etc., beside. Of this amount it is not possible to tell exactly what rightfully belongs to Ryder. Perhaps \$100,000 may be an approximate statement. It seems to be generally agreed that if Lombard stays where it is Ryder must also stay with it. If any other plan is adopted then Ryder better go to Chicago University and affiliate with their Theological School. Chicago offers the most generous terms for such affiliation, even a possible renting of a lot of land on its campus for ninety-nine years at a merely nominal rent if we want to build a building. \*3 The following discussion, therefore, relates to the College and not to Ryder except so far as Ryder is necessarily involved:

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Three great conditions must be met as fully as possible in any plan we finally adopt for the future of Lombard College. The plan must be, First—Educationally wise for a long time to

come; Second—Denominationally loyal in the largest sense of that word; Third—The legal autonomy of Lombard ought to be preserved, so it can receive bequests; about \$60,000 being in wills for us as known of. Lombard must also keep its legal autonomy in order to make good its solemnly accepted trust to take care of Ryder Divinity School, and for many other reasons. In the light of these three desirable accomplishments let us consider the seven questions proposed in the referendum, referring to them always by number.

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The First Question. In favor of 1 is sixty-one years of sentiment and tradition very deep rooted; the duty of keeping intact an institution that has conferred about 400 degrees so that its diplomas may not be from a corpse; much denominational interest and pride; our Charter, and organization will be maintained and our legal autonomy; with enthusiastic teachers and officials much good work can undoubtedly yet be done; the funds can be restored and money raised to go on without deficit; there is no reason to doubt that a student body of at least a hundred can be kept here. An earnest enthusiastic Board and faculty can do all this and more.

Against 1 are these considerations. We are a small denominational college in a small city where there is a bigger college down town; we are in a college congested locality; the great educational boards are not likely to help us or approve of us where we are; we shall never be on the pension list for our teachers; the High School plants and State schools and universities entirely outshine us in equipment; the question of co-education is under fire and the segregated school may come in; bright young people clamor for the big State schools, the normal, professional, technical, business, trade, agricultural short course schools, and the demand for the old four years college course may be even less than it is now; all small denominational schools are having an increasingly hard struggle and the Carnegie and Rockefeller Boards think they have figures to prove that it is a hopeless and steadily losing fight they are making; to do the work of our State University an institution would have to have the income of at least sixty millions of permanent endowment funds: Ryder School is not very well cared for and equipped where it is now, and as it might be cared for with no additional expense if it was affiliated with Chicago. Chicago Divinity School is open to both men and women, on equal terms, and

trains not only for preachers, but for every form of church work and mission and social service which Ryder as now located and equipped can not possibly do. Ryder, however, can not be moved if Lombard is to stay where it is, unless an addition is made to our permanent endowment much larger than now appears possible.

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The Second Question. If Lombard and Ryder stay where they are every one of the fifty (about) Universalist Churches in the Mississippi valley should consent to have an annual Lombard Day in which the strongest possible appeal should be made for money and for students.

The Methodists have five schools in central Illinois which have united in a plan to get at least one dollar a year for education from every Methodist in the territory. The plan promises to yield a surprisingly large sum for their educational work. They outnumber us but if every universalist and every alumnus or former student of Lombard and Ryder will stand by and help we can surprise ourselves, both in money results and the increasing student body.

The Methodists have no idea of giving up any of their denominational schools. The more the State institutions and Educational Foundations increase the more pressing need they see for the small schools where a personal touch can be maintained and some direct positive religious influence exerted on the lives of boys and girls at the most critical stage of their being. We must have an enthusiastic Board, President, Faculty, and Graduate association. With that of course we can go on and, to an extent at least, satisfy the three conditions we desire to accomplish.

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The Third Question. In favor of 3 it may be noted that it is the plan suggested and most approved by the Carnegie and Rockefeller Boards; it puts some of our teachers who have given us long service in a school on the pension foundation; it satisfies a strong local feeling that our funds were given to do something in Galesburg; it relieves the local officials and friends from longer carrying a burden of responsibility that seems to have grown very irksome and disheartening to many of them; it keeps the name of Lombard alive even if it is in a hyphenated form as the name of many good colleges has been; it affiliates us with a col-

lege which the Boards approve and which they believe has a long future; it fairly accomplishes the first of the three things we desire to do, namely, it seems educationally wise. It seems to those who favor this, that it is not at all extinction of Lombard but ensuring her perpetuity, and that under such union "Every student and graduate of Lombard College will have an Alma Mater that will survive the years."

As bearing on 3 is the fact that the Lombard Trustees decline to instruct any committee to even attempt to formulate a detailed plan of union, and the Committee of Five chosen to consider the whole question of the future of Lombard does not seem inclined to meet with a similar committee from Knox to attempt the working out of a detailed plan of possible union to submit to both Boards of Trustees for final and official action. The reasons for the disposition of the majority of the Board of Lombard Trustees to decline to attempt to formulate a definite plan of union with Knox seem to be as follows: Against 3 the fact stands that it calls for the surrender of our present campus, buildings, charter, funds, and separate organization and legal existence.

If the union is made it will undoubtedly be made in the largest and fairest way possible. As far as formulated it will be Knox-Lombard, on Knox campus, with twenty-four Trustees, twelve from each of the present Boards. All the property of both schools will be in the hands of this new Board. At the end of each following year this Board chooses new members to fill the annual vacancies. In five years no one knows or cares which particular college brand they bear.

Certainly no denominational tests or conditions whatever can rightly be asked of this new Board. With the most generous and honest intentions in the world in five years Lombard College will be simply the small end of an hyphenated name and it may well be doubted if any one takes time even to attach that. We have lost our legal identity or autonomy. We have no Charter, no funds, no Board, no local habitation or name. We can not receive our bequests, no one can give anything to Lombard. There will never be another graduate of Lombard to appear in a Catalogue. The denominational feeling may be fairly conserved by putting Ryder at Chicago, but Lombard autonomy is absolutely lost. This may be unavoidable but before we submit to it we ought to take time enough to be sure that it is wise and best for us, and that no possible plan can be devised which is better.

The Fourth Question. At this time not much is known about this fourth question. Some one proposed Springfield as a large city, the State capitol without any college. It was thought that the State libraries and other institutions there would be of much educational value for a college making a specialty of training for good citizenship. Several Springfield people have written asking that the matter be investigated. No financial or property offer has yet appeared. It may be added that there is no Universalist or Unitarian church in Springfield, and that the Carnegie and Rockefeller Boards apparently do not believe that a college is needed there.

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The Fifth Question. Hoopeston is in Vermilion County, Illinois. It has a population of 4,698. It is as clean, well drained, well kept city as any in the State of its size. It has two large factories and some smaller ones. It has a large Universalist Church. It is fifty miles from the State University at Urbana, and about the same distance from any college east or west or north. It is the seat of Greer College. This college is named for Mr. Greer, who left about 500 acres of fine land for it. This land brings in about \$2,700 a year for the college. Greer has three Trustees, a Charter, a campus of about nine acres, but near McFerren Park which can be used for an athletic field. It has a building about equal to a fair High School building, well made and respectable in appearance. So far the city of Hoopes-ton apparently has not taken much pride in Greer and it is not known very much in college and educational circles. The Trustees of Greer have made a strong proposition to Lombard for some form of union. The Trustees of the Universalist Church have also asked that the situation be carefully studied in determining the future of Lombard. The Rockefeller and Carnegie Boards do not believe that it is wise to try to make a college at Hoopeston unless there could be at least a half million dollars behind it. Possibly if Lombard goes to Hoopeston, Ryder might also go. Hoopeston may be as good a place for Ryder as Galesburg is. In that case Lombard could carry \$300,000 there. If Greer would turn in its property, under fair and equal conditions, and the Hoopeston people raise enough to make another \$300,000 all told, this might give us the needed half million and some good college buildings besides. If some donor can be found that sees a large future and a great plan for this union, his name ought to appear as the name of the Univers-

ity comprising Greer College of Science, Lombard College of Arts, and Ryder School of Theology. There is no pledge anywhere as yet that this plan can be carried out, and in voting for it probably one would want to make his assent conditional upon certain things being done and a plan being very definitely formulated. Ought Lombard to consider a smaller financial offer to move to Hoopeston than this outlined above? What is the least financial proposition that we should consider?

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The Sixth Question. It has seemed to practically every one that if Ryder School is to be moved from Galesburg that it should be affiliated with the Divinity School of Chicago University. This plan proposes that one or two Universalist teachers be kept there to do the denominational features of the work and keep the students in touch with Universalist churches everywhere in the middle west, but that all such work as is common to all Protestants be done in the regular classes of the Divinity School. At first no building should be erected. If, however, after fair trial the plan proves successful, then needed buildings could be erected. Some have thought that this plan for Ryder might be equally good for Lombard. It has seemed that buildings could be rented at first and later if found best erected and owned by us, for our college boys and girls; that in these buildings a dean and certain tutors could be maintained. The function of Lombard would be not to maintain a teaching staff of its own, but to use the income of its permanent scholarships and other funds, to make a home for, and give the personal touch to as many of our Lombard boys and girls as we could provide for, helping them to their A. B. Degree from Chicago University. This would give all the close personal help of the best small college combined with the atmosphere and educational advantages of the best University life.

It would be somewhat like the English plan of grouping small colleges round the university. If this is done Lombard keeps its name, charter, funds, Board of Trustees intact. It entirely preserves its legal autonomy.

It fastens Lombard to assured strength forever. Next to the third plan this appears to be likely to meet the approval of the great educational Boards. Against this plan is cited the fact that Lombard would never have another graduate. All the students it helped would have their degree from Chicago University and feel themselves as belonging to that institution.

While our legal autonomy would be entirely intact, and all our funds ours completely as they are now, the body of Alumni would never be any bigger, and would naturally grow smaller each year by deaths. Chicago segregates the sexes and that is against the co-educational ideals of Lombard. It may in spite of all our Houses could do, substitute the large city college for the small college in a place like Galesburg, which Lombard has always maintained was the better place for the average undergraduate. As far as organization is concerned, Lombard maintains its complete autonomy, but as far as a body of alumni is concerned it seems to invite gradual but certain disappearance.

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**The Seventh Question.** As far as any other plan than any of those so far named has been formulated that of uniting Lombard with Buchtel College at Akron, Ohio, has perhaps received most attention. This would put Ryder at Chicago and Lombard at Akron, Ohio, united with Buchtel which is our nearest Universalist neighbor.

Buchtel College is in a city of 69,067 people, a great center of industries. It has a fine Science Hall in close touch with the local rubber and other factories. President Church is steadily advancing the institution. It is, however, in a State more crowded with colleges than Illinois is. It takes Lombard out of the State and section which has built it and leaves the great Mississippi valley with no school under the auspices of the Universalist Church.

Nevertheless in some ways this plan has seemed to many as being worth consideration as fulfilling the three conditions we desire to maintain; namely, to be educationally wise, denominational loyalty, and to preserve our legal autonomy.

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Will everyone who has been connected with Lombard as officer, teacher, student, donor or friend please express an opinion on this most important question of the future of the old school.

We enclose a card that fits our files. In voting do not write questions but refer to them by numbers, and be sure and sign your name and give your correct postal address. If you wish to say more than there is room to say on the card do so on separate sheet.

Now that this whole question is up let us do our utmost to

decide it wisely for generations to come. The inaction forced upon us and the sharp differences of opinion are likely to be very trying to many of us. Nevertheless let us not be so anxious to do something that we do a less wise thing. Better no action for a long time than a foolish action hastily entered upon to make it appear that we are doing something. Let us be patient with one another, frank and clear and positive in our own views, and not allow any clamor to stampede us into action that a year after we regret that we ever took.

We would like to have all the votes in inside of two weeks, so results can be tabulated for the use of the Committee of Five and the Board of Trustees.

LEWIS B. FISHER.

President's Office, Lombard College.

Galesburg, Illinois, April 5, 1912.



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